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TAGS: [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [EINV](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [OSCE](#)  
SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY DANIEL FRIED BILATERAL WITH  
MONTENEGRO FOREIGN MINISTER MILAN ROCEN

Classified By: Assistant Secretary Daniel Fried, reasons: 1.5 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary: Assistant Secretary Fried met with Montenegrin Foreign Minister Milan Rocen on 11/29/07 on the margins of the 11/29-30/07 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Ministerial in Madrid. Rocen was not willing to commit on when Montenegro might recognize Kosovo - he intimated that the EU's, Cyprus' and the other former Yugoslav republics' views were all significant in determining the timing of Montenegro's eventual recognition of Kosovo. Rocen requested consultations with Washington on Montenegro-NATO relations, and the Assistant Secretary agreed that such consultations should be held. Rocen acknowledged Serbian efforts to pressure Montenegro, but he said that they did not influence Montenegro's policy. Rocen extolled political progress in Montenegro, praised the U.S. Ambassador in Montenegro, noted that unanimous passage by Montenegro's parliament of a Security and Stabilization Agreement (SSA) with the EU, and encouraged more U.S. investment in Montenegro. End Summary

Kosovo  
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12. (C) The Assistant Secretary noted that Kosovo will soon emerge as an independent nation. He asked what Montenegro's views were on the Kosovo issue. Rocen went into a fairly lengthy talk about a recent trip he had taken to Cyprus, and his attempt to explain to the Cypriots that a divided Kosovo was much worse for their interests than an independent Kosovo. Rocen then concluded that it would be "much better" to get consensus in Europe regarding the recognition of Kosovo's independence. Fried emphasized that unanimity among EU members would be almost impossible to achieve given, for instance, Cypriot, Greek, and a few others' reservations about Kosovo's independence. Fried suggested to Rocen that once about 20 EU members recognized Kosovo's independence, that would be the time for Montenegro to recognize Kosovo as well. Rocen asked when the recognition issue would come to the fore, and Fried responded possibly in January. Rocen would not commit on the Kosovo recognition issue, but he said "count on us" and asked where Montenegro could help. Fried responded that Montenegro should talk to Serbia about not acting to destabilize the region.

Serbian Pressure  
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13. (C) The Assistant Secretary asked if Belgrade was

pressuring Montenegro on Kosovo. Rocen said that Serbian Prime Minister Kostunica tries to pressure everybody, including by "throwing arrows" at the U.S. Fried responded by saying that the U.S. can manage Serbia's accusations. Rocen said he thought that Serbian politicians' statements on Kosovo were largely designed for internal political consumption in Serbia given the upcoming elections there. The Montenegro Foreign Minister added that Serbia's tactics reflected "weakness," rather than "strength."

#### Montenegro and NATO

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¶4. (C) Rocen thanked Fried for U.S. support for Montenegro's military, calling it "very important". He said that NATO integration was "invaluable" and extolled the IPAP program. The foreign minister said that Montenegro wants enhanced "political dialogue with NATO". In that context, Montenegro would like to consult with the U.S. Assistant Secretary Fried accepted Rocen's request for NATO-related U.S.-Montenegro consultations.

#### Political and Economic Progress in Montenegro

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¶5. (C) The Montenegro Foreign Minister started the bilateral by extolling political and economic progress in his country. He said that over two thirds of parliament supported the constitution. There was unanimous support in parliament for Montenegro's SSA with the EU. The Montenegro government was, at the behest of the mayor of Srebrenica, building an elementary school there. Responding to a question from Fried, Rocen said he did not know which ethnic group(s) would attend the school. Rocen said that the "whole world" was coming to Montenegro to do business, but that there was

comparatively little American economic presence in Montenegro - Rocen said he would like to see much more American investment in his country.

¶7. (U) Assistant Secretary Fried has cleared this message.

LLORENS